

Marine Parks around the Capes

Managing marine parks

Parks Australia and DBCA recognise and respect the long history of the Noongar people, including the Wadandi and Bibbulmun groups in the Capes region and their ongoing connection to sea country.

There are three marine parks around the Capes. Ngari Capes Marine Park is located in state waters and is managed by the Western Australian Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions (DBCA).

South-west Corner and Geographe Marine Parks are offshore in Commonwealth waters and are managed by Parks Australia.

Parks Australia and DBCA work closely together to protect these important areas and the cultural and natural values in the parks through assessments of activities, compliance efforts and undertaking research to better understand and monitor the health of the parks.

We engage with Traditional Owners, recreational users, tourism operators, the fishing industry and other stakeholders in managing the parks to ensure conservation and sustainable use benefits for all Australians.

The marine environment around the Capes area in south-west Western Australia is protected through three marine parks:

Ngari Capes Marine Park

Ngari Capes Marine Park is one of Australia's most diverse cool water (temperate) marine environments. The warm tropical waters of the Leeuwin current mingle with cooler southern waters in the Capes, supporting a high diversity of species.

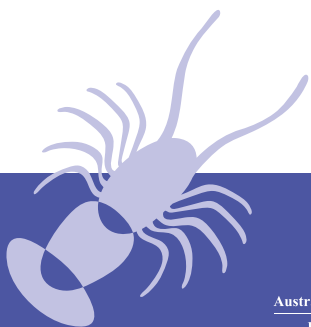
This park features underwater landscapes of breathtaking grandeur and protects important granite and limestone reefs, large temperate seagrass meadows and corals that are at the southern limit of their range.

Geographe Marine Park

Complementing the state park, Geographe Marine Park provides protection for bountiful seagrass meadows that are found further offshore. These dense leafy places are home to numerous species of small fish and other marine animals. Importantly the sheltered waters of Geographe Bay provide safe nursery habitat for many species and are part of the migratory pathway for humpback and blue whales.

South-west Corner Marine Park

Wrapping around the Capes and extending out into the deep ocean, the South-west Corner Marine Park contains a wide range of important ecosystems in both shallow and deep water. Unique undersea features such as the Cape Mentelle upwelling introduce nutrient rich waters boosting marine life around the Capes, making the park important for seabirds, white sharks, Australian sea-lions and five whale species (Antarctic blue, pygmy blue, humpback, sperm and southern right).



Marine parks are there to be enjoyed.



Rules at a glance

These tables provide an overview of activities that are allowed or not allowed in different zones in the Commonwealth and State parks. Please refer to the relevant websites, Apps and contact details for more information.

Detailed rules are also in the *Ngari Capes Marine Park Management Plan 2013-2023* and the *South-west Marine Parks Network Management Plan 2018*. All activities are subject to the requirements of relevant state and Commonwealth laws.

Department of Environment and Conservation (2007): Western Australian Marine Conservation Reserve Tenure and Management Boundaries.

Department of the Environment and Energy (2018): Australia's Network of Marine Parks Conservation Reserve Tenure and Management Boundaries.

Geoscience Australia (2003): GEODATA TOPO 100k.

Geoscience Australia (2004): GEODATA COAST 100k.

Geoscience Australia (2014): Australian Maritime Boundaries (AMB) v3.0.

Produced by the Environmental Resources Information Network (ERIN), Australian Government Department of the Environment and Energy 2019.

Ngari Capes Marine Park (State)

Overview of rules for recreational activities (refer to the *Ngari Capes Marine Park Management Plan 2013–2023* for full details of recreational and commercial rules)

Activities ✓ = Allowed X = Not allowed	Sanctuary Zone	Recreation Zone	Special Purpose Zone: Shore-based activities	Special Purpose Zone: Surfing	General Use Zone
Snorkelling/diving	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Motorised vessels	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Water-skiing	X	✓	X	X	✓
Windsurfing/kitesurfing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Surfing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kayaking/canoeing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Customary Aboriginal hunting	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Crabbing	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Net fishing	X	✓*	✓	✓	✓
Line-fishing	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Abalone fishing (in season)	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Rock lobster fishing	X	✓	✓	✓**	✓
Octopus potting	X	✓*	✓	X	✓
Spearfishing	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Shell collecting (alive)	X	X	X	X	✓
Shell collecting (dead)	X	✓	✓	✓	✓

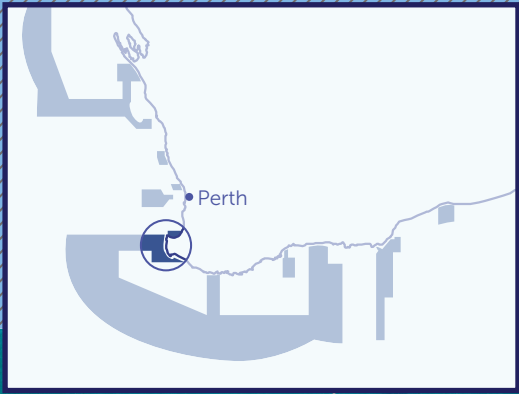
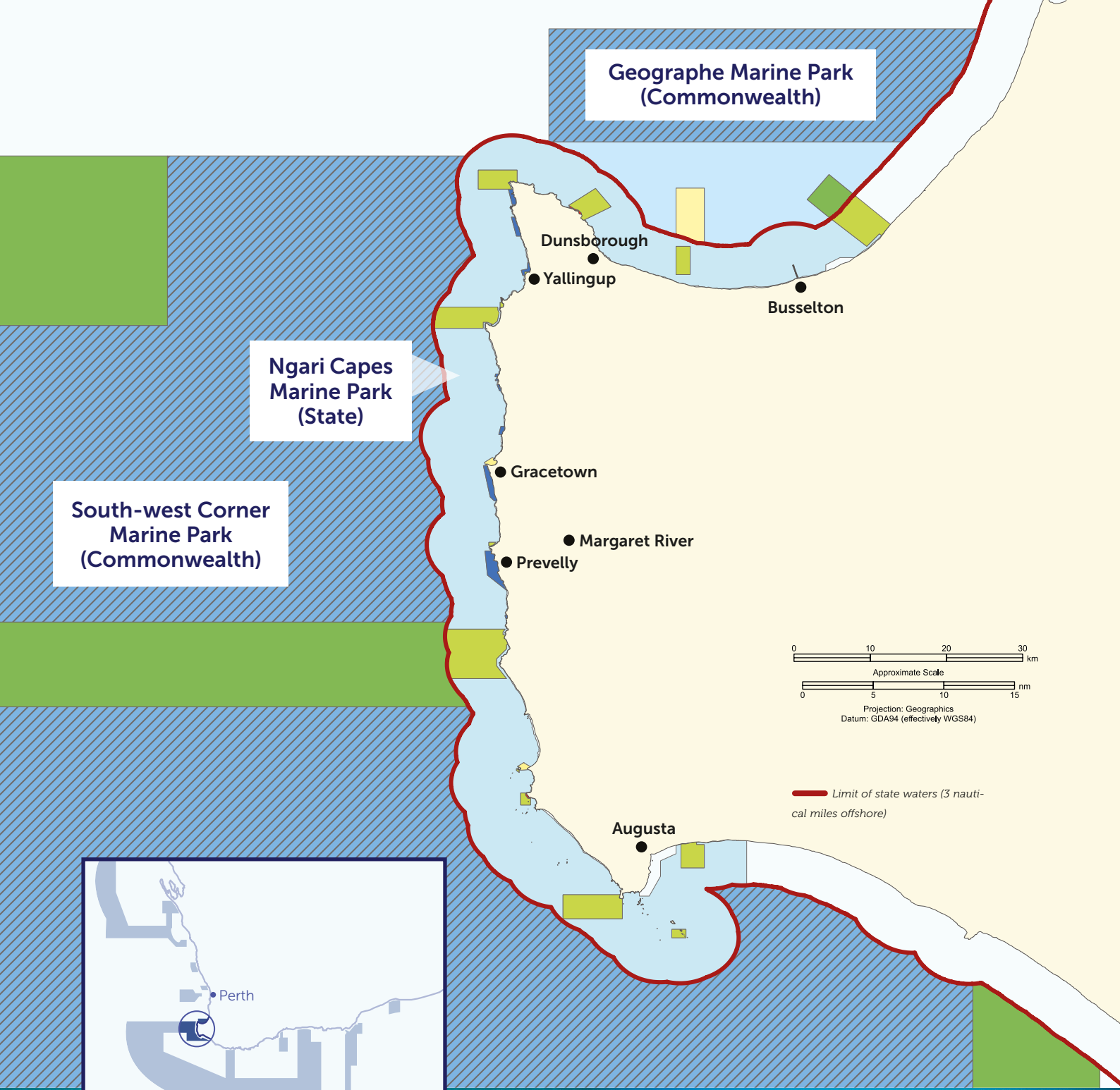
* Except Cowaramup Bay ** Use of pots in this zone are only allowed in the Margaret River SPZ.

South-west Corner and Geographe Marine Parks (Commonwealth)

Overview of the rules for activities (refer to the *South-west Marine Parks Network Management Plan 2018* for full details)

Activities ✓ = Allowed X = Not allowed A = Authorisation required. Activity is allowable, subject to assessment.	National Park Zone	Habitat Protection Zone	Multiple Use Zone (Geographe)	Special Purpose Zone (Mining Exclusion)
Recreational fishing – consistent with WA recreational fishing laws	X	✓	✓	✓
General recreational use (non-fishing, nature watching, boating, etc.)	✓	✓	✓	✓
General use – drones, remote piloted aircraft, etc.	A	A	A	A
Commercial fishing – gear restrictions apply	X	A	A	A
Tourism – Non-fishing (including nature watching, scuba/snorkel tours etc.)	A	A	A	A
Tourism – Charter fishing tours (including spear diving tours)	X	A	A	A
Mining operations including exploration	X	X	X	X
Research	A	A	A	A
Traditional use – Non-commercial hunting/ food gathering, ceremonial and cultural use	✓	✓	✓	✓

Thank you for helping protect the marine environment around the Capes.



Life in the parks

A wide range of marine animals use the habitats in the parks, including King George whiting, crabs and squid in Geographe Bay, as well as West Australian dhufish, blue groper and western rock lobster along the west coast.

Migratory species such as southern right and humpback whales, salmon and herring that spend time in the marine parks benefit from having an important place on their migratory route protected. You can often see resident seals and dolphins feeding and playing along the rugged coastline.

All three parks cater for a wide range of on-water experiences, such as fishing, surfing and nature watching. The reefs of the Capes coast also provide all manner of snorkelling and diving opportunities. There are numerous shipwrecks in the parks with the HMAS Swan wreck providing an excellent dive experience in Geographe Bay for suitably qualified divers.

If you're heading to a marine park, it is your responsibility to know the zones and the rules. Do your bit to help protect the marine environment.

For more information on recreational fishing rules in WA:

- Visit fish.wa.gov.au
- Download the Recfishwest App which includes a marine park mapping tool.



For more information on the marine parks:

- Visit exploreparcs.dbca.gov.au
- Download the Explore Marine Parks WA App 
- Visit parksaustralia.gov.au/south-west
- For local information about Ngari Capes Marine Park phone DBCA Busselton on (08) 9752 5555



Your local marine parks protect:



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Stay safe and enjoy your marine park experience.

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